# The Absent-minded Mallard

# MORGAN

## Birthday Party

Children's Leisure Products Ltd.

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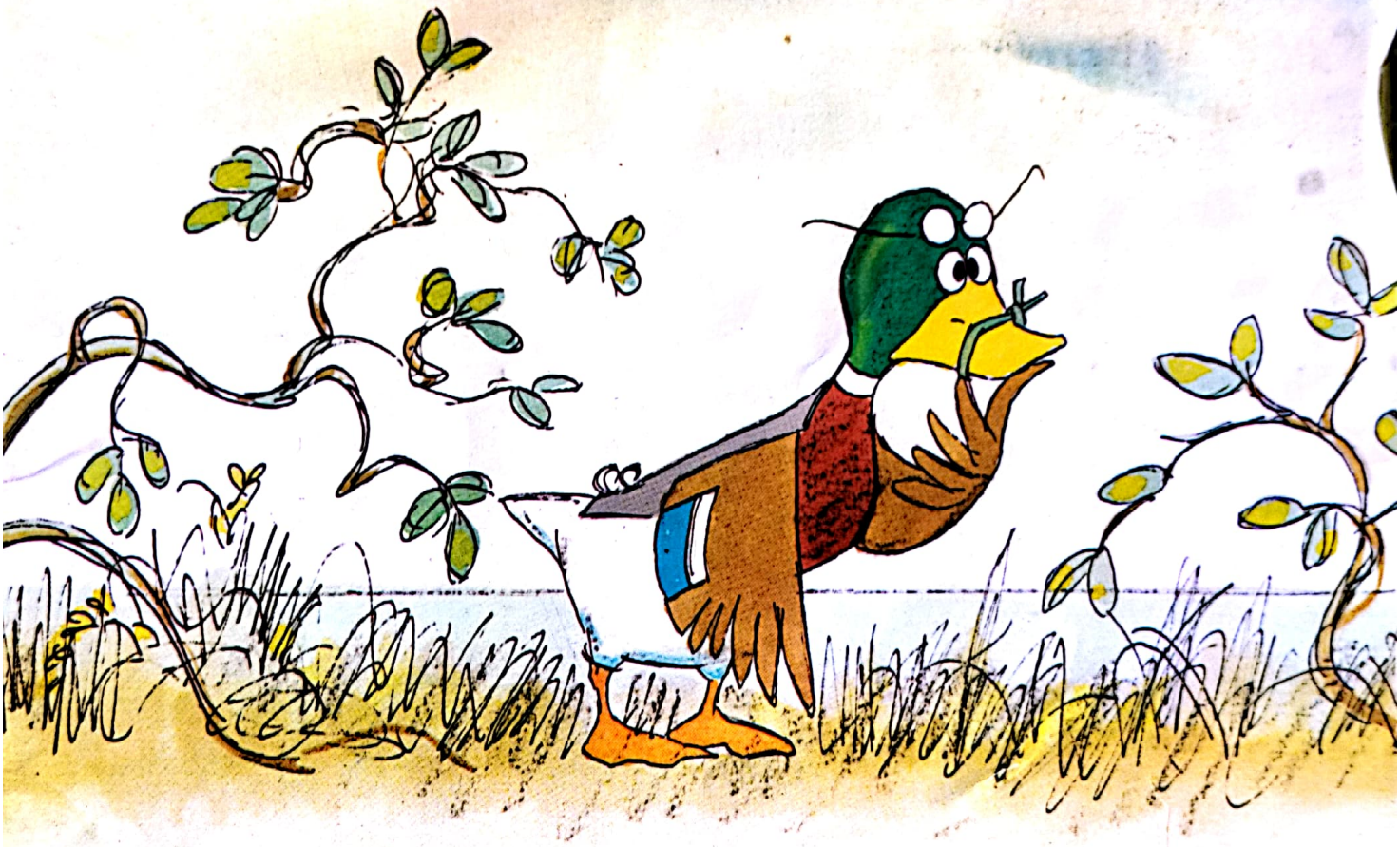
by Bill & Audrey Titcombe



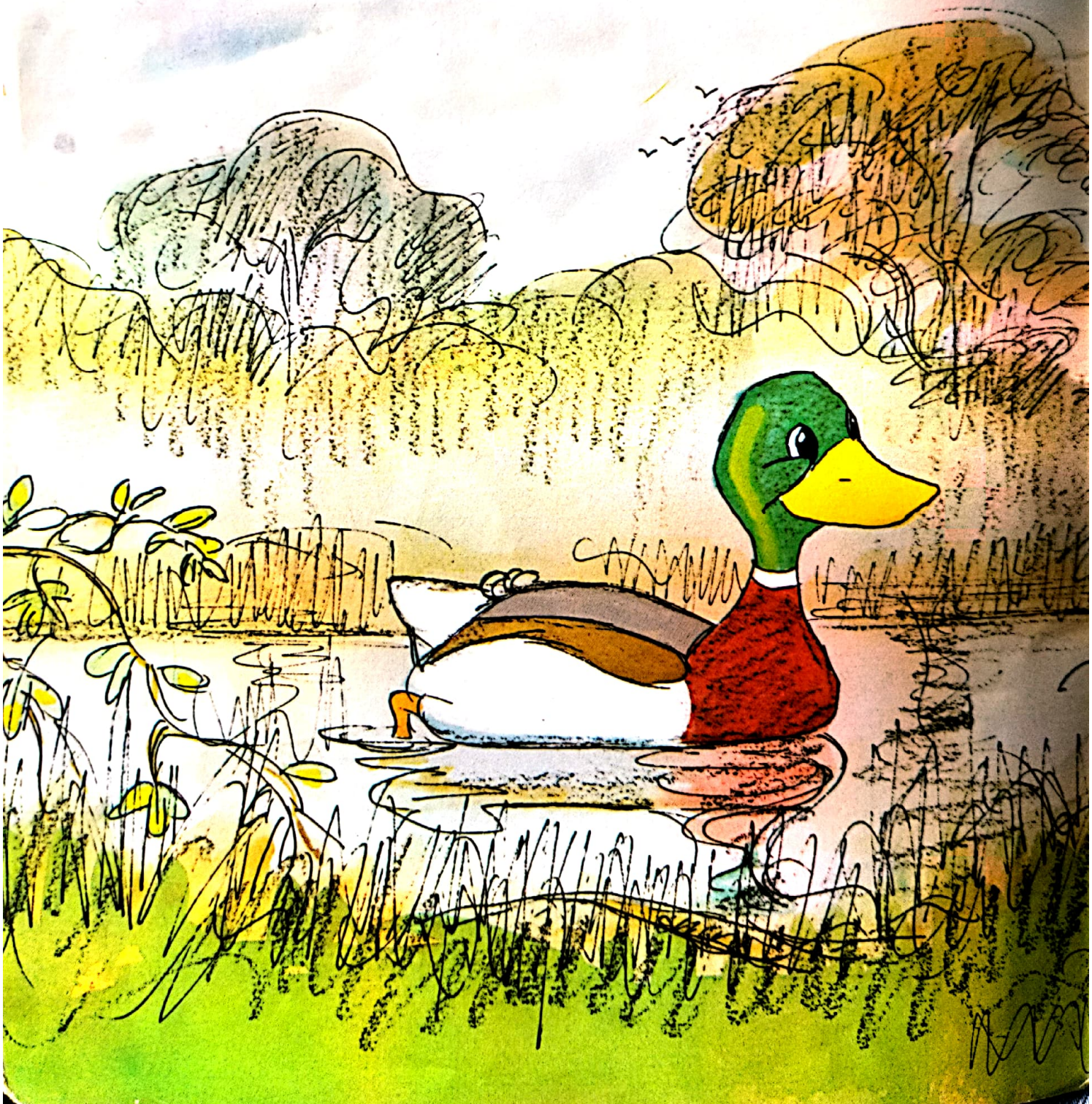
Morgan woke up, adjusted his glasses, and looked down at his beak. Sure enough there was a reed tied round it. Morgan was very absent minded, and his parents had suggested the idea of the reed around his beak to help him remember things.

The problem was that he could never remember why the reed was there in the first place.

He tried and tried to recall what he had to remember but thinking made his head ache, so he decided to forget about the reed.

Then Morgan heard a noise in the water and although he was short-sighted, Morgan's hearing was very good. He turned to see his father.

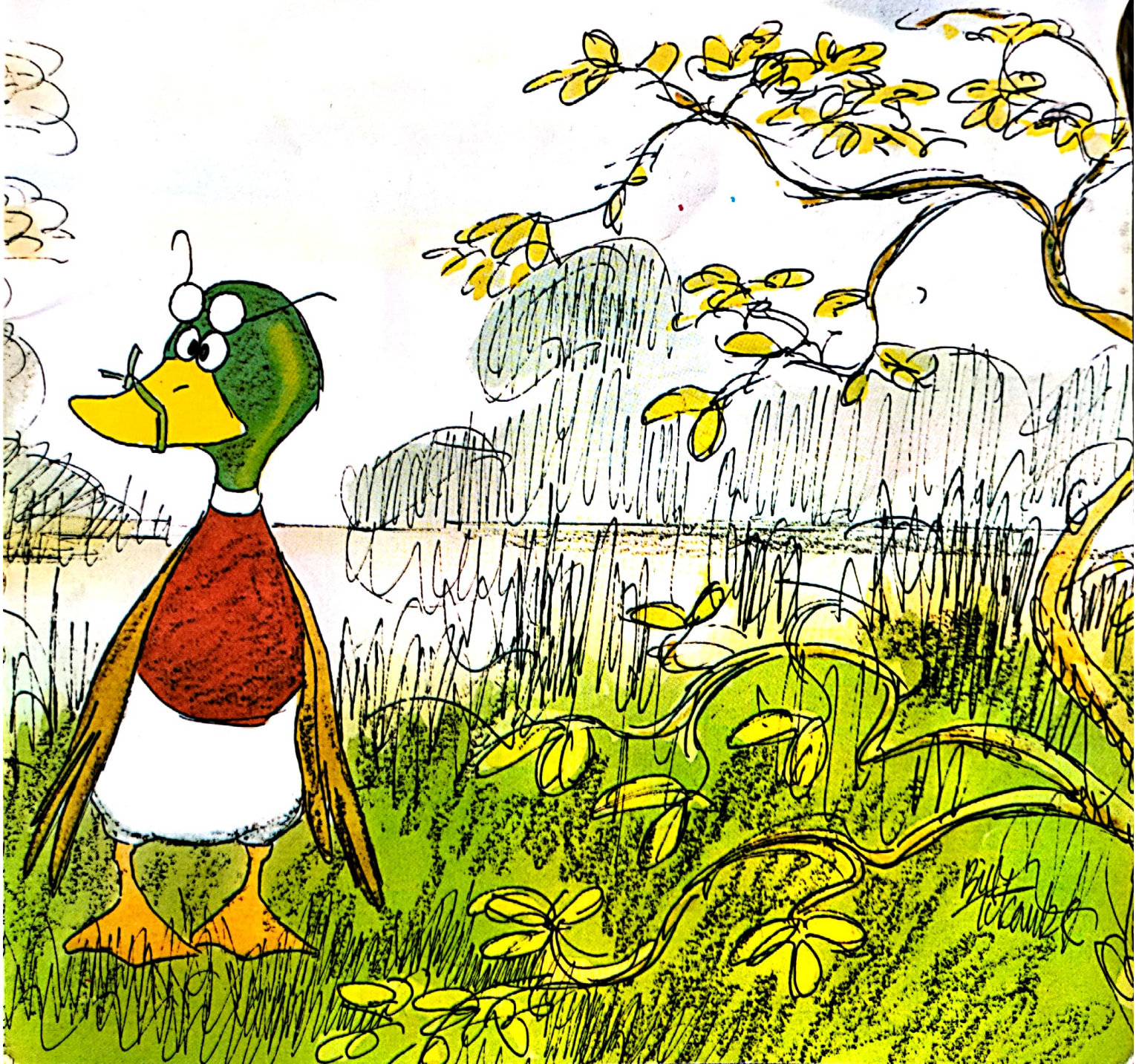
"Good morning," said father. "Have you remembered that it is mother's birthday today?"



Morgan breathed a sigh of relief, now he knew why he had a reed tied round his beak.

"Good morning, father," he said, as he untied the reed. "Yes, of course I knew it was mother's birthday. I have invited one or two friends of mine along, is that all right?"

"Certainly," said father, "the more the merrier. Now come along and help me get breakfast, I want everything ready before mother wakes."



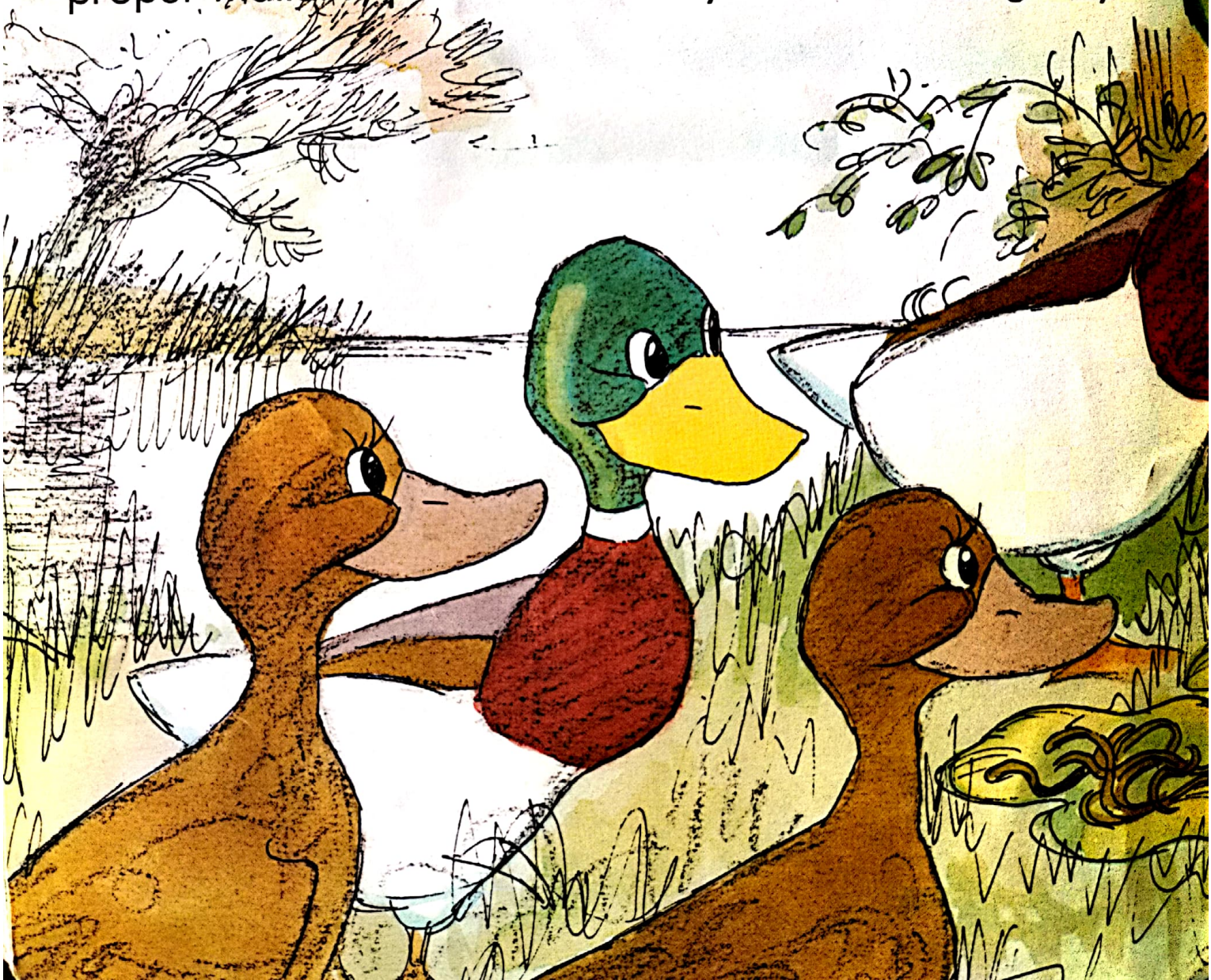
Morgan and father started searching the river for food. Then father saw a fish and had a great game chasing and catching the flashing silver creature. Morgan thought this was great sport and decided to try to follow his father's example. He dived and dived, but he didn't catch anything, apart from a bump on the head and an angry glance from father.

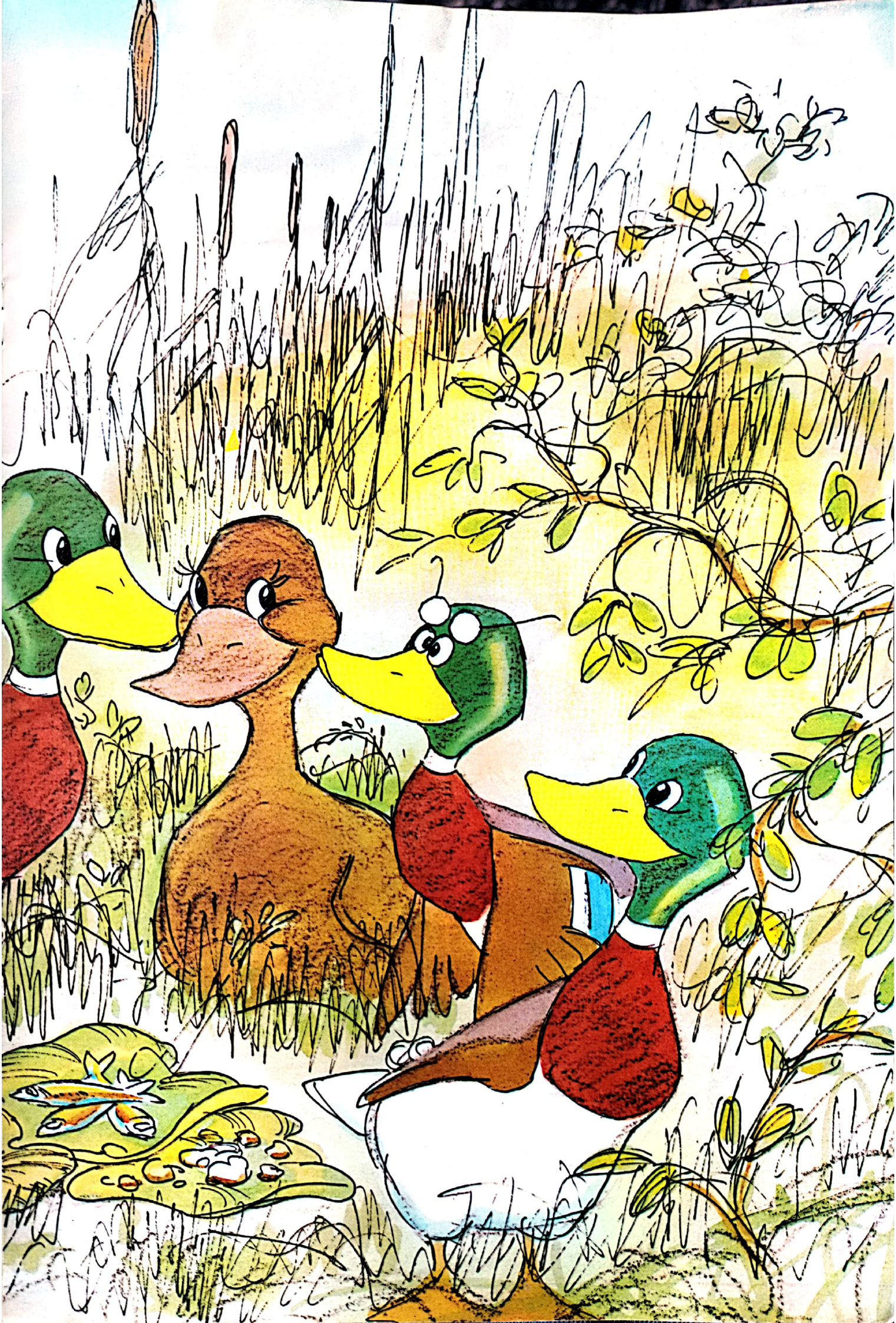
Then all at once Morgan saw a movement in the water. He dived once more and much to his surprise came up with a fish in his beak. He was so delighted that he called over to father, and as he opened his beak the fish dropped straight back into the water.

When mother appeared, she looked very nice, she had taken special care with her feathers. Father gave her a kiss, and wished her a happy birthday. Morgan did the same, and mother was very happy.

Before long the family started to arrive, they all brought presents, and soon everyone was laughing and joking. After lunch, Clarice, who was Morgan's eldest sister, spoke to mother. "How is Morgan coming along?" she asked.

Mother said that he was coming along very well, and she added with great pride, "he nearly caught a fish this morning," and Clarice, who was a very proper mallard, just closed her eyes in a knowing way.

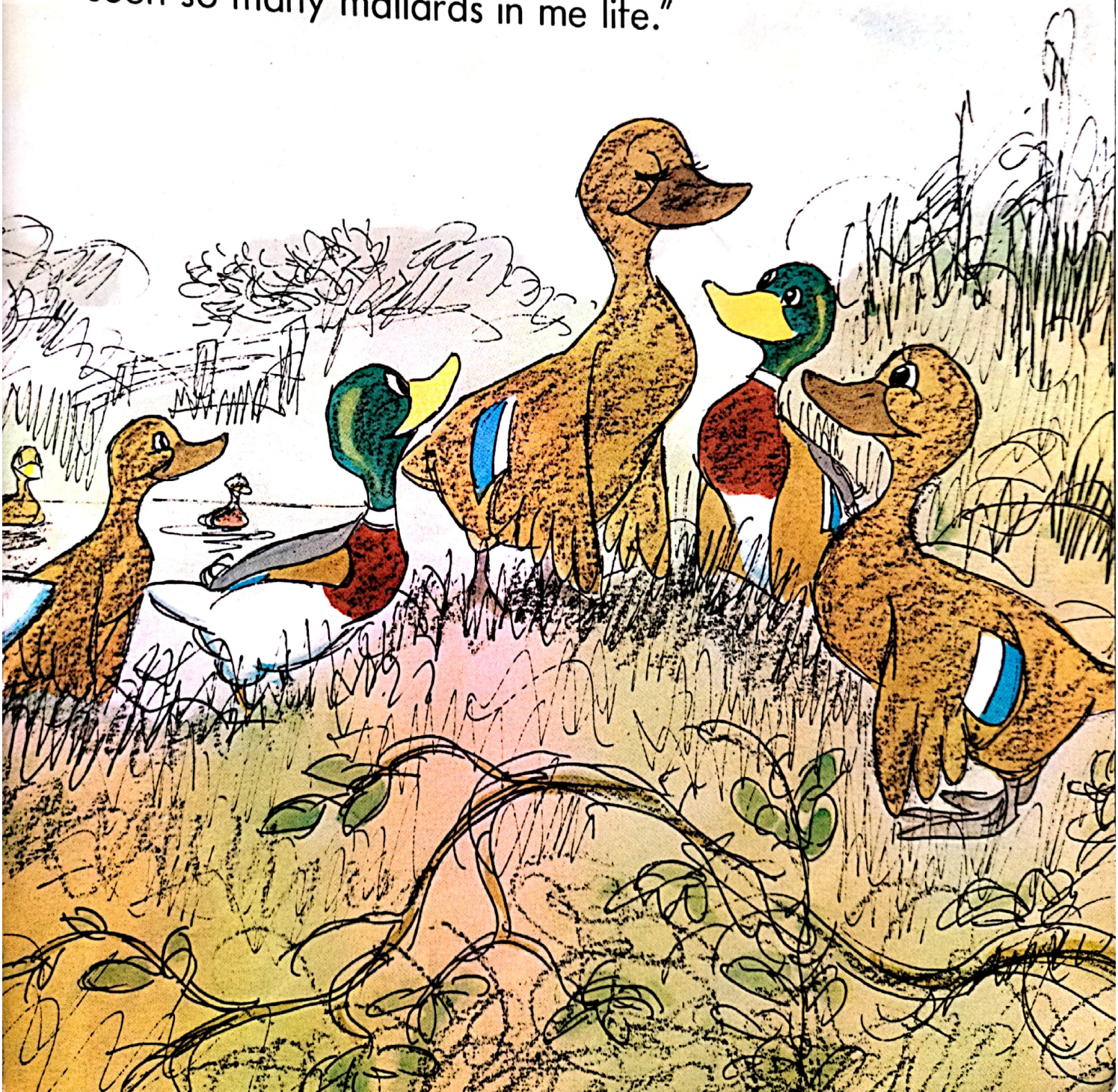




Morgan spent some time talking to his brothers and sisters, and looking after all the baby mallards, dear kind Morgan, you see, loved them all. Then, much to Morgan's delight coming along through the water was one of his best friends, Percival Water Rat.

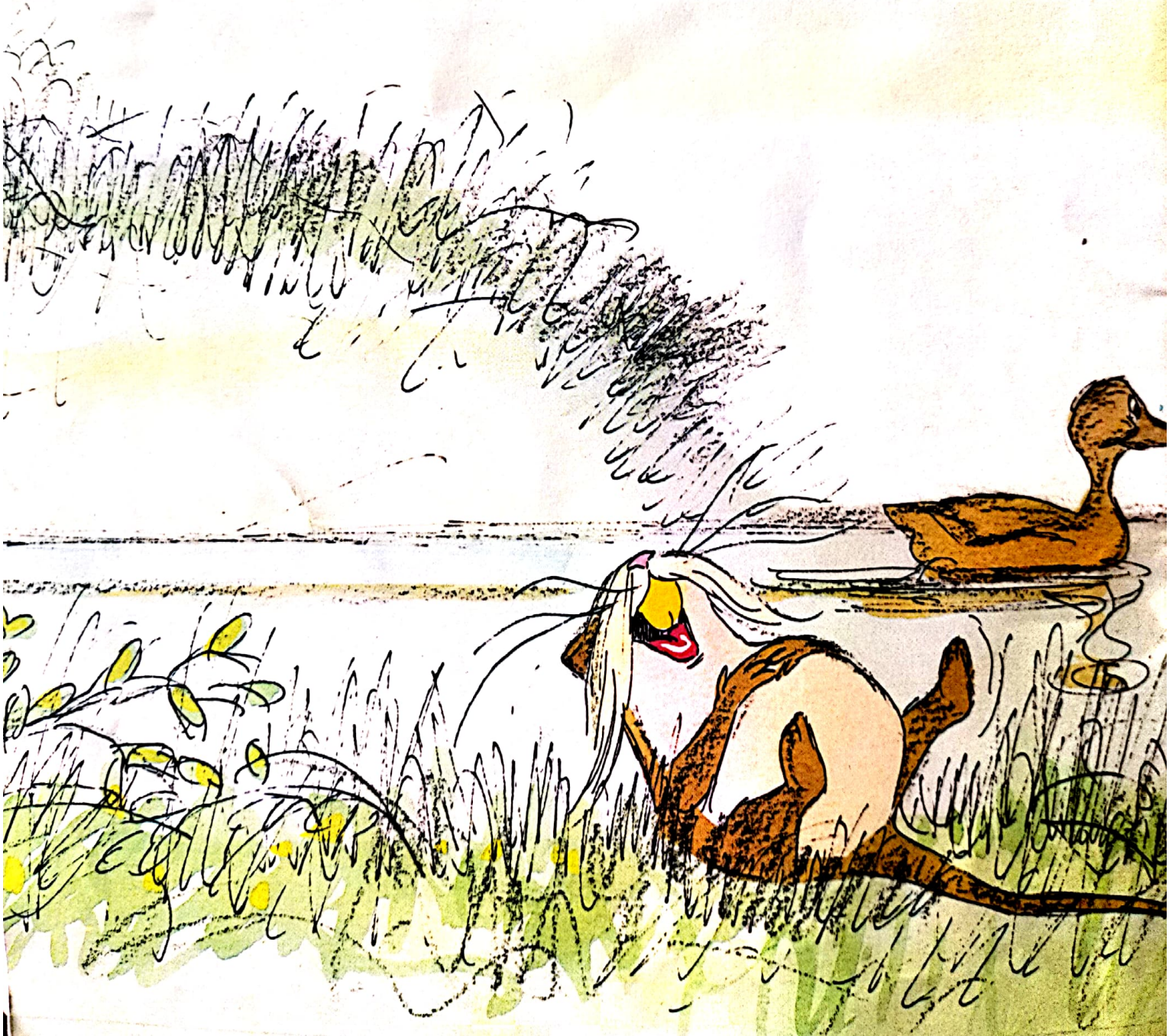
"Hello, Percival," said Morgan. "I'm so glad you have come to the party.

"Party, what party?" asked Percival. "I just came along to see what all the noise was about. I've never seen so many mallards in me life."



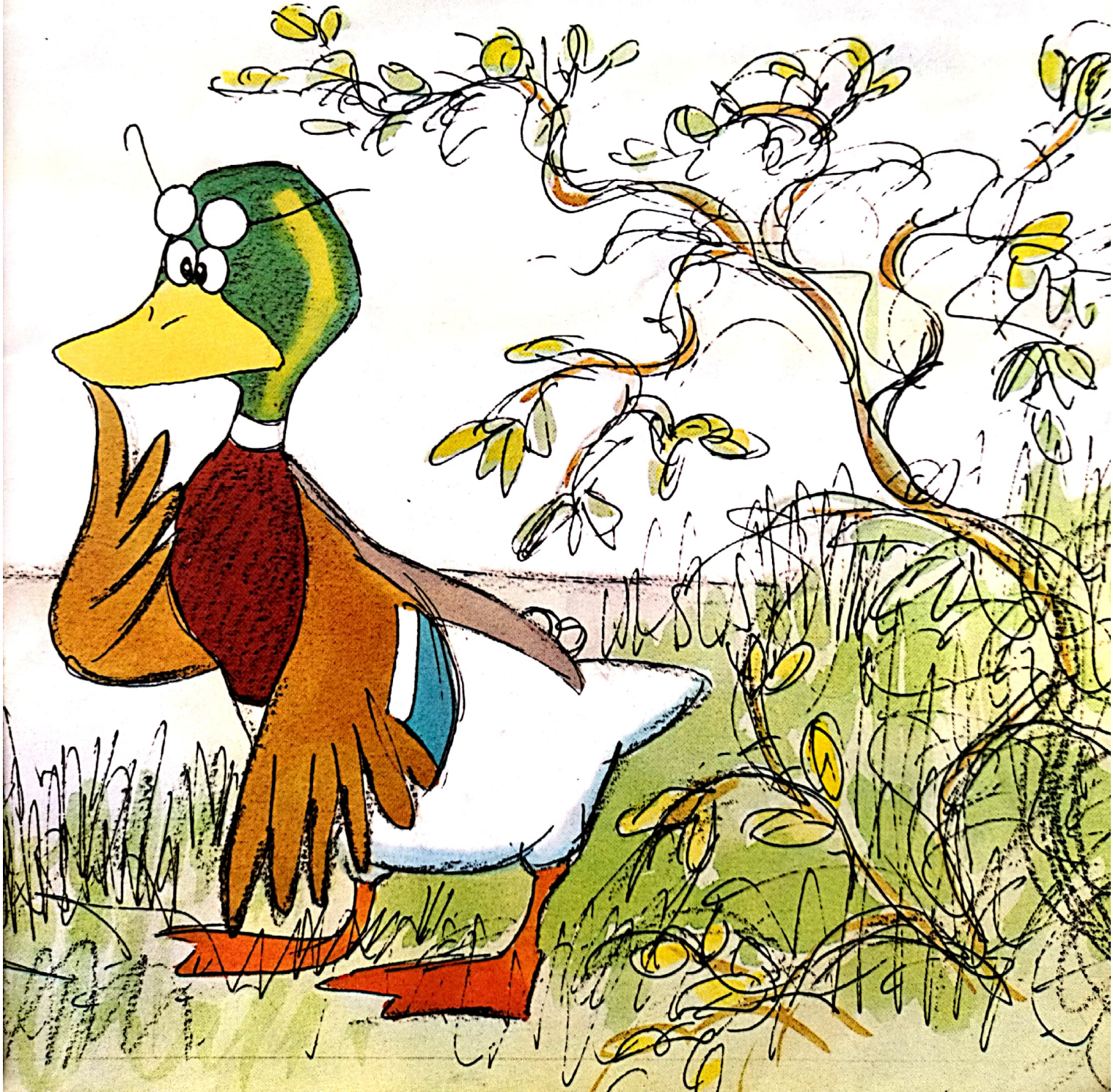
"It's mother's birthday," said Morgan excitedly. "Please come over and bish her a wappy birthday," said Morgan getting his words all mixed up.

Percival rolled over onto his back and laughed and laughed. "Please forgive me," chuckled Percival trying to control himself. "Of course I'll *bish* her a *wappy* birthday," and with that Percival started laughing again.



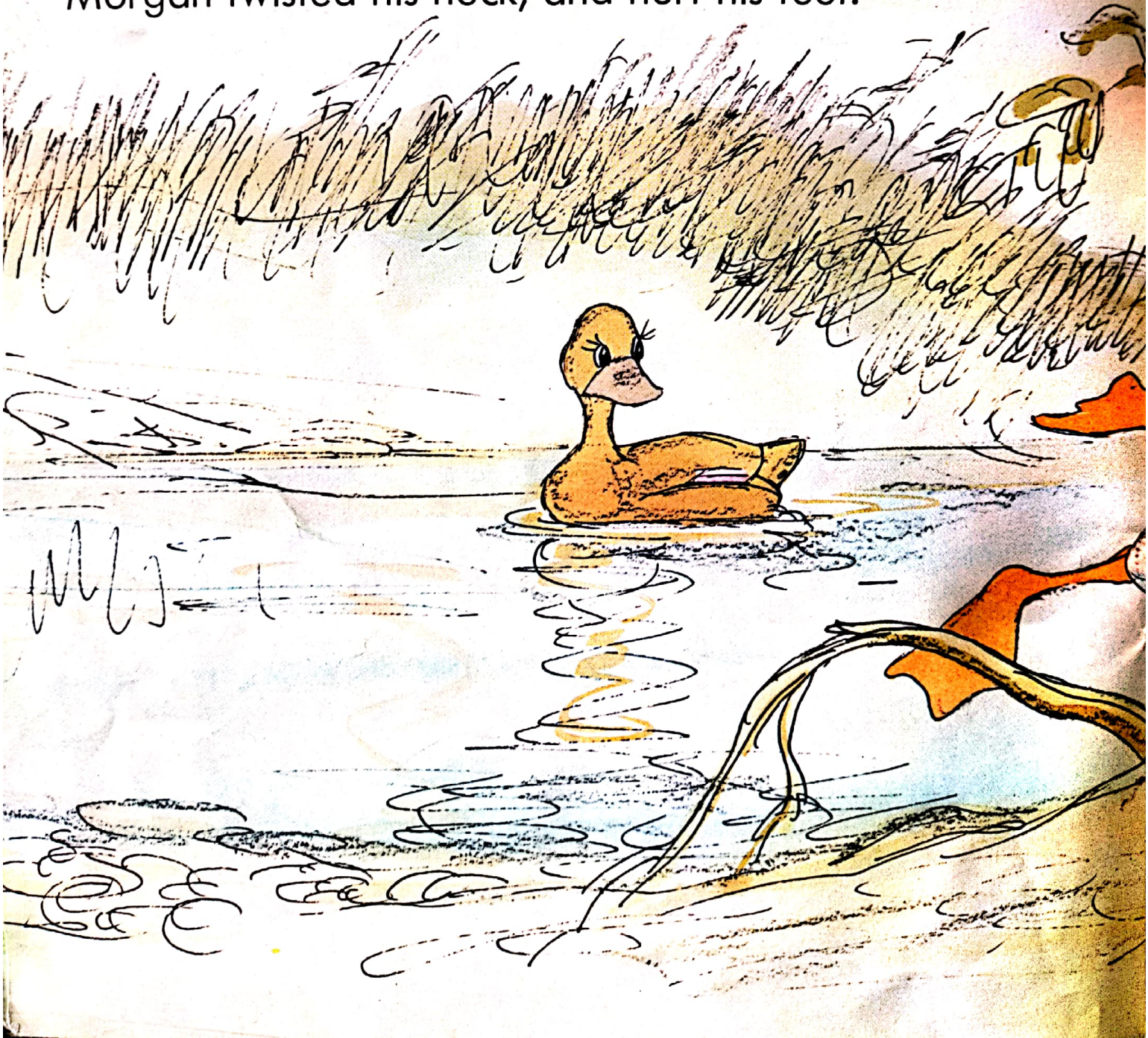
"Please, Percival," said Morgan, "do stop laughing, you see if I forgot to ask you to the party, I expect I forgot to ask Eleanor Otter, Christabell and Charles Canada Geese, and Swan. Whatever shall I do?"

Percival pulled himself together. "Leave it to me, Morgan, me dear old love, I'll dash off and get them all to come along."



As soon as Percival left, Morgan adjusted his glasses, and started chasing after fish. He wanted to impress his friends when they came. After a time Morgan realised that he was not going to catch anything, so he decided to get some nice new feathers for mother.

He swam across the river to the other side, where he knew he would find just the ones he wanted. He climbed out of the water, started up the bank, and tripped over a large twig lying on the ground, poor Morgan twisted his neck, and hurt his feet.



Clarice, who had been watching him, swam over and helped him back to the other side. Mother was most concerned, and with the help of Clarice bound up his neck and his feet.

Soon all was ready for the birthday tea. Percival arrived followed by Eleanor, Christabell and Charles, and finally Swan.

Everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to mother and she blushed and looked most contented.

When everyone had gone, mother went to rest whilst father tidied up.

Morgan wanted to help, but with his neck and his feet bandaged there wasn't much he could do.

Father said "Good-night" to Morgan and Morgan said "good-night" to father. "By the way," said father, "why have you a reed tied round you beak again?"

Morgan looked down at his beak, but of course he couldn't remember.